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SUBJECT: REFUGEES IN CHAD: PRM/USAID VISIT TO TREGUINE,
BREDJING, AND FARCHANA CAMPS

1. Summary. PRM/AFR Mary Lange and USAID/FFP (DART) Suzanne Poland traveled to the Adre region of Eastern Chad from February 16-18 to visit the refugee camps of Treguine, Bredjing, and Farchana and to meet with staff from UNHCR, WFP, IFRC, Chadian Red Cross, MSF, Secadev, CORD, and CARE. Camp population figures for the three camps are currently around 15,000 for Treguine, 33,000 for Bredjing and 20,000 for Farchana; with the spontaneous arrival of refugees from the border, these numbers are expected to continue to slowly increase. UNHCR has identified a potential new site (Gaga) between Abeche and Farchana to accommodate the overflow from Bredjing and Farchana and any subsequent new arrivals. Basic assistance to refugees was proceeding smoothly in all camps, with NGO partners now capable of providing adequate (if not yet always up to SPHERE standards) health care, water, sanitation, and shelter to refugees. Education and community services were slower to be implemented, but efforts are now being made to establish more comprehensive programs in these sectors.

2. The PRM/USAID team observed food distribution in all three camps. Distributions were well organized in Treguine and Farchana (less so in Bredjing). WFP only had sufficient stocks for a 15-day ration of cereals (30 days of all other commodities) but refugees seemed accepting of the shortfall with the understanding that another 15-day ration of cereal would be provided as soon as stocks arrived. WFP indicated that by mid-March, sufficient cereals would be in place to resume full rations. Of concern to all agencies was the potential impact of drought in the border region and the need to stabilize Chadian populations in situ to avoid their coming to the camp and registering as refugees. USAID Poland will send separate report at later date on recommendations for assistance to Chadian host-communities. End Summary.

Camp Numbers and Capacity Issues

3. UNHCR's latest official statistics for the refugee camps, compiled by the Chadian National Commission for Assistance to Refugees (CNAR) indicate 13,928 refugees in Treguine Camp, 29,275 in Bredjing, and 18,914 in Farchana. A new registration of refugees is planned for February 23-27 in all three camps which, if similar to the registration exercise in northern camps (septel), may eliminate some duplication/fraud and significantly reduce population figures. In addition to official camp residents, a number of spontaneous refugees had arrived over the past month from border areas including an estimated 3,500 in Bredjing and up to 1,000 each in Treguine and Farchana. While Treguine had the capacity to hold up to 15,000 refugees, both Bredjing and Farchana were far over capacity with increased numbers placing strain on available water, sanitation, and health facilities.

4. UNHCR reported that it had final approval from the GOC for a newly identified site (Gaga), about one hour from Abeche. The camp is between Abeche and Farchana and could accommodate 8,000 refugees from Farchana, 10,000 from Bredjing, and up to 12,000 new arrivals as part of UNHCR's

contingency planning. UNHCR has already contracted for the sinking of wells, and drilling was reportedly underway. UNHCR/Abeche and UNHCR/Ndjamena both expressed interest in asking Africare to assume the camp-management role for Gaga, and Africare staff in both Abeche and Ndjamena appear receptive to becoming more involved in both refugee assistance and more long term refugee and host community food security programs in the Adre region. UNHCR currently anticipates providing Africare with around \$250,000 in 2005, but significant additional support would be required from PRM (for Gaga camp) and potentially USAID (for host community assistance). USAID/DCHA/FFP is already funding Africare's food security and nutrition education activities in the Adre area through a five-year Title II Development Assistance Program.

Basic Assistance at Treguine: Minimal but Meeting Needs

15. The PRM/USAID team visited Treguine Camp on February 17, accompanied by IFRC and the Chadian Red Cross (CRC) which are responsible for camp management, health care, food and non-food distribution, education (with UNICEF), community services, shelter, and logistics. Treguine is the newest camp in eastern Chad, having only opened in late September.

Despite its newness, the PRM/USAID team was impressed with the work of IFRC/CRC in quickly establishing basic services for refugees. The team toured the IFRC/CRC health center which appeared to be providing comprehensive services for refugees, including outreach through community health workers and traditional birth attendants. No major medical concerns were reported, and IFRC's vaccination campaign to contain meningitis (5 cases reported) in January appears to have been successful. The vaccination campaign included local residents within an area of about 30 km radius from camp. Global malnutrition, based on a December WHO study, remains slightly high (11.3% according to WHO; 14% according to Action Against Hunger) but severe malnutrition was only 1.1%. Latrine coverage is up to SPHERE standards (1 latrine per 20 people) and water coverage (managed by Oxfam) was reported at 18 liters/person/day. IFRC reported that both the education and community services sectors are lagging behind but will be a primary focus of efforts in 2005. The team visited briefly the Treguine primary school, noting the intense desire for education among children as well as adult women. UNICEF support, while minimal, had begun to arrive in the form of tents and basic school supplies. With other basic services now relatively well-established, increased donor attention should be focused this year on primary, vocational, and adult education.

16. The PRM/USAID team also visited Bredjing Camp on February 17 with IFRC delegates. IFRC/CRC will be taking over camp management of Bredjing from CARE International at the end of February, per a recent agreement between UNHCR and IFRC. The team sensed that very little planning had yet taken place for this transition. IFRC staff were not yet very familiar with the camp and relied on Oxfam to provide a general tour of Bredjing. IFRC also noted that CARE intended to take most of its staff with it, leaving IFRC to find new staff for critical activities such as food and non-food distribution. Health care in Bredjing will continue to be managed by MSF/Holland. The team did not visit MSF's health center, but UNHCR staff in Adre expressed no major concerns about health in the camp and WHO's nutrition study showed malnutrition rates of only 8% global and 1.1% acute malnutrition. The team, accompanied by Oxfam, primarily focused on water and sanitation in Bredjing. Latrine coverage remains below standard at 1 latrine per 37 people, but Oxfam noted plans to continue to build additional latrines. Water coverage was also below standard (10 liters/person/day) and while Oxfam reported no long lines for water this time of year, it was clear that the camp water system (intended for only 20,000) would come under increasing pressure as temperatures rose. Camps services were also overtaxed by the spontaneous arrival of some 3,500 refugees from border areas in recent months. Now residing on the outskirts of the camp, these new arrivals had been interviewed by CNAR and provided food rations. However, UNHCR was reluctant to provide shelter materials until refugees can be moved to a more permanent location. With these new arrivals and the camp already some 10,000-13,000 over capacity, the need for a new camp for refugees was very apparent.

17. The PRM/USAID team visited Farchana Camp on February 18. Farchana was the first camp established in eastern Chad for Sudanese refugees. It was set up in December 2003. Originally intended for no more than 6,000 refugees, its population is now nearly 20,000 (including nearly 500 spontaneous new arrivals). The most pressing concern at Farchana continues to be water, with only 9 liters of water per person per day currently available. Unlike other camps where water availability is also below standard, UNHCR

reported problems of long lines and even fights over water in Farchana. The planned movement of 8,000 refugees from Farchana to Gaga should help alleviate these problems.

18. Other sectors in Farchana appeared to be well covered. Secadev (Secours Catholique pour le Developpement) was responsible for camp management, food and non-food distribution, water and sanitation (with Oxfam support), and education (with support from UNICEF and Jesuit Refugee Service). MSF/Holland is responsible for health care, including community outreach and training of traditional birth attendants. No major health problems were reported. CORD had begun to organize community services, including activities for youth and women. CORD noted some reluctance on the part of community leaders (mainly men) to some of its proposed activities, including tree planting and income-generating activities for women, but was intent on pushing forward. (Comment: We note that concerns over establishing activities that have "signs of permanence"

continue. End Comment.)

19. The PRM/USAID team had the opportunity to discuss with UNHCR and WFP the work of PRM-funded partners (IFRC/CRC and Secadev/CRS) in the camps. While UNHCR felt strongly that neither had the capacity to take on camp management of the new Gaga camp, both UNHCR and WFP expressed satisfaction with the performances of IFRC and Secadev in terms of food distribution and other services. IFRC appeared to have a strong expatriate team (5) to support the CRC. Secadev as well was benefiting from on-the-ground support from Catholic Relief Services and Jesuit Refugee Service). PRM should plan for continued support to both IFRC and CRS/Secadev in FY05.

Food Aid and Food Security: Camps and Local Population

10. The PRM/USAID team observed food distributions in all three camps. The first blanket supplementary distribution was successfully conducted at Treguine Camp and in surrounding villages within 5 km of the camp on February 16. IFRC and WFP will use lessons learned in this exercise to fine tune the blanket supplemental distribution in the Bredjing and Farchana camps that are to take place the week of February 21. The blanket distribution targets pregnant women (6-months or more along), lactating women and children under five years of age or under a predetermined size (height and weight) if age is unknown as recommended by the WFP nutritionist.

11. General food distributions were proceeding well in Treguine and Farchana camps with scooping method providing rations directly to individuals and families. In Bredjing camp, the distribution was also going fine but the CARE team was still using the group distribution method in which representatives of each block collect the food for the 10 families in that block and then divide the food among the families. WFP and UNHCR have recommended that all distributions use the scooping method and this will be implemented in Bredjing camp when IFRC takes over the camp management. There have not been any complaints from the refugees in Bredjing camp about the group distribution method, but WFP and UNHCR see the scooping method as a means to avoid unfair division of commodities and to insure that women and children receive their fair share.

12. The ration received in this distribution was incomplete due to the fact that sufficient cereals had not yet arrived to cover 30-day ration amount for all 200,000 refugees and 25,000 local beneficiaries in Eastern Chad. Every beneficiary did receive a full 30-day complement of CSB, vegetable oil, pulses, sugar and salt and a 15-day quantity of cereal (sorghum). WFP plans to provide the remaining 15-day quantity of cereal as soon as the next convoy arrives from Benghazi, Libya, estimated for end Feb/early March. However, if there are delays in delivery, this would essentially coincide with the mid-March regular food distribution. The refugees at all three of the distributions seemed to understand the situation, and there were no apparent complaints or problems with the commodities and amounts received.

13. Several NGOs expressed concern that the refugees have not yet received in any distribution a full 2,100 kcal ration for 30-days but have received closer to 1800 kcal per day in 15-day increments. WFP plans that the pipeline will furnish sufficient commodities to provide a 30-day ration for distribution in mid-March and plans to work towards the 2,100 kcal ration for the following months as the commodities already in port are delivered overland through Libya and Cameroon.

14. In all three camps, the presence of considerable number of livestock was noted. The livestock that the refugees

brought with them provide a supplement to the ration received from WFP and in a real sense this is part of the coping strategy to insure food security for the refugee families. IFRC census of livestock for Treguine camp, for example, indicates that the 13,928 refugees brought with them 3,000 donkeys, 7,000 head of cattle, 3,000 goats and sheep and about 200 camels. The IFRC team indicated that there are regular slaughtering of animals including refugee-owned livestock in the nearby local meat market and that refugees often eat meat but had no specific data on how often or in what quantities.

15. A specific food security assessment of the local population was not carried out during this 3-day visit to camps. The interagency mission on food security among local populations that was conducted in November, 2004 reported that there are pockets of food insecurity in the areas surrounding these three camps. There are recommendations and plans for Food for Work projects in the areas around these three camps. The presence of large numbers of livestock is putting pressure on the local resources of water, firewood and pasture and this affects the food security and coping mechanisms of the local population which numbers about 160,000 in the area surrounding the three camps.

Recommendations

16. The PRM/USAID team offer the following recommendations for consideration by PRM and USAID Washington:

- a. With basic life-sustaining services fairly well established, the time has come to focus increased attention on education and community services. Refugees are eager for both basic education and new vocational skills. UNICEF, while slow to start, is now supporting NGOs working in the education sector. PRM should consider funding for UNICEF in FY05, earmarked for education.
- b. Continued PRM support is recommended for both IFRC/CRC Bredjing and Treguine) and CRS/Secadev (Farchana). Both organizations are doing well and are a critical component of UNHCR's overall plan for assisting refugees in 2005.
- c. IFRC and CARE need to quickly coordinate and plan for the IFRC takeover of Bredjing camp by end February. Lack of advanced planning could lead to a very disorganized transitional period with negative ramifications on assistance to refugees.
- d. Should UNHCR decide on Africare as its implementing partner for camp management in the new Gaga camp, PRM should consider co-funding for Africare both for Gaga camp and for agricultural/reforestation programs that could benefit both refugees and host communities.
- e. Given the impact of refugees and their animals on the environment and host communities, UNHCR and partners will need to consider alternative fuels/firewood sources as well as water and forage options for livestock. Increased donor support for projects assisting local communities will also be required.

17. Khartoum and Tripoli Minimize Considered.
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